

RELIGION AND ATHEISM IN THE U.S.S.R. AND EASTERN EUROPE.

Edited by *Bohdan R. Bociurkiw* and *John W. Strong*, assisted by *Jean K. Laux*.

Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975. xviii, 412 pp. \$17.50.

An international symposium on religion and atheism in Communist societies was held at Carleton University in April 1971. The papers have been expanded, and, in some cases, updated to 1974 for this publication. The emphasis is on church-state relations in the post-World War II period. In bringing together experts on religion under communism, the book resembles such collective works as *Religion and the Search for New Ideals in the USSR*, edited by W. Fletcher and A. Strover (1967), *Aspects of Religion in the Soviet Union*, edited by R. Marshall, Jr. (1970), and *Marxism and Religion in Eastern Europe*, edited by R. DeGeorge and J. Scanlan (1976). Many authors in the volume under review have also contributed to the above-mentioned works. This volume, however, adds the comparative dimension by examining the status of religion in the Soviet Union and in all the East European Communist countries.

The book may be divided into four sections. In the first, two essays present widely contrasting Marxist views of religion. W. Bochenskii describes the Marxist-Leninist utter rejection of religion as both false and harmful. B. Bosnjak, himself a Yugoslav Marxist, shows, in contrast to Russian Marxists, a keen appreciation of the appeal of religion in meeting important human needs, above all, the need for "eternity." He ends his essay with a call for a dialogue between the "dogma" of religion and the "free thought" of Marxist philosophy, to the benefit of both. The remaining three sections, consisting of eighteen essays, show how historical, cultural, and national factors have modified the basic Marxist attitude and policy toward religion.

The second section is devoted to the Soviet Union. Four articles survey different religious movements: M. Bourdeaux and K. Matchett discuss the official Russian Orthodox church, B. Bociurkiw deals with religious dissidents, A. Bennigsen comments on Islam, and V. Markus considers the Ukrainian Uniates. Regrettably, there are no articles treating the Protestants, Buddhists, and national churches. There is, however, an article by Ethel and Stephen Dunn, based wholly on Soviet data, which shows that "religiosity" is a direct response to present Soviet reality, an article by David Powell analyzing both the negative and positive content of Soviet atheism, and an article by W. Fletcher on religion and Soviet foreign policy (which appeared in book form in 1973). The third section, which consists of the only comparative surveys of individual countries—one on Catholicism by G. Simon and the other on Judaism by J. Rothenberg—is especially valuable.

The last section of nine essays surveys church-state relations in each of the East European countries (two on Yugoslavia). Most include a brief historical background, which is crucial in explaining the striking differences in the status of churches under Communist regimes—ranging from the outright ban of all churches as in Albania to dynamic church activities as in Poland. There is an all too brief introduction by Sir John Lawrence, and a fairly comprehensive index is provided. Unfortunately, the book lacks a concluding essay.

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